Subject: Russian platinum coinage

Davison, Lonnelle

[Washington, D.C.]

1933

November 6, 1933

American Numismatic Society
156th and Broadway
New York City

Gentlemen:

I am preparing a general article on the subject of platinum. In this I should like to incorporate several paragraphs on platinum coinage. For this information I have called the Numismatic Division of our National Museum, and they have referred me to you.

Do you know whether or not France has ever issued platinum coinage in her monetary system? I came across the statement somewhere that this was tried for a short time and then abandoned.

There is, of course, considerable on the Russian platinum coinage issued in 1828 and given up nearly 20 years later. In a book on "curious facts," I read that since the Soviets came into power they had also issued platinum coins and later discontinued them. Do you know if this is true?

Any information you may be able to give me on these questions would be deeply appreciated; also any available data on odd or interesting single platinum coins which might lend color to a story on platinum and its uses.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Lonnelle Davison

Lonnelle Davison (Miss)
3834 Garrison St., N. W.
Washington, D. C.

November 8, 1933.

Miss Lonnelle Davison
3834 Garrison St., N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Madam:

As far as we know Russia is the only country that issued platinum money. Other nations have taken it into consideration and have made patterns or trial pieces but have never attempted this metal for circulation. I have never heard of France actually issuing any platinum money. I see that you are familiar with the Russian money which was issued for about 20 years a hundred years ago. I have not heard that the Soviets have issued platinum money. They possibly have, though I think if so we would have known it. One of the most interesting facts is that in the old days when platinum was worth one-half or one-third the value of gold many counterfeits were made in platinum and then gilded. One of the commonest counterfeits was the 20 escudo piece of Spain issued during the reign of Isabella II. I have seen several five and ten dollar United States gold pieces counterfeited in platinum.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator